



# INDIANA STATE POLICE LABORATORY DIVISION

## PHYSICAL EVIDENCE BULLETIN

### **MISSING PERSONS/UNIDENTIFIED REMAINS**

**INTRODUCTION:** The National Missing Persons DNA database is part of the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS). The purpose of the database is to provide identifications using DNA by matching profiles from unidentified humans to profiles of missing individuals or closely related family members.

Missing Persons cases, including unidentified human remains, may be submitted to the Indiana State Police Laboratory. The type of case and samples should be clearly marked on the Request for Laboratory Examination. An Unidentified Human Remains (UHR) Testing Information Sheet on page 4 of this document and/or a Missing Person and Family Reference Sample Information Form and donor consent form shall also be completed when applicable.

The following sample types are eligible for entry into the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS):

#### **I. UNIDENTIFIED HUMANS (REMAINS)**

- A. Includes skeletal or decomposed remains that are not identified by traditional means, as well as individuals who are unable or unwilling to identify themselves. Permission should be obtained from the coroner before samples from remains are submitted for analysis.
  - 1. Submit an oral swab standard or a blood standard in a purple top tube from living individuals.
  - 2. Submit a bone, tooth, blood or tissue sample as a DNA standard from deceased individuals. The chance of obtaining a DNA profile from human remains is heavily dependent on the quality of the sample. Please contact a member of the Biology Missing Persons and Unidentified Human Remains team for assistance if needed.

- a. Tissue-submit approximately 1 square inch as a standard only if little or no decomposition has occurred. Sample should be obtained by a medical professional and submitted in a plastic specimen jar inside proper packaging. Store in an evidence freezer until time of submission.
- b. Bone/teeth-if possible, submit at minimum one bone sample at least three inches in length, or one whole tooth with no fillings (molars are preferred). Submission of multiple bone/tooth standards is strongly recommended, especially for potentially poor quality samples (dry, damaged, sun-bleached, etc). For assistance with sample selection, please contact a member of the Biology Section's Missing Persons/Unidentified Human Remains team for assistance if needed.
- c. If the sample is "wet" (has adherent soft tissues or fats) you may package in plastic as necessary and store in an evidence freezer until time of submission.
- d. If the sample is "dry" package in paper and store at room temperature until time of submission.

## **II. DEDUCED VICTIM STANDARDS**

- A. Includes items that can logically be assumed to contain DNA from the missing person. Care should be taken to select items that should contain DNA only from the missing individual. Examples may include (but not be limited to):
  - 1. Medical samples obtained prior to the individual going missing, such as slides, tissue specimens or heel stick cards.
  - 2. Personal care items (for example; razor, toothbrush, or hair brush).
  - 3. Baby teeth known to come from the missing individual.
  - 4. Clothing worn by the missing individual, particularly unlaundered undergarments known to have been worn only by the missing individual.
- B. DNA standards from closely related family members should be submitted if possible to support the relationship.

### III. FAMILY REFERENCE STANDARDS

- A. Submit an oral swab standard or a blood standard in a purple top tube from parents, children, and full siblings of the missing individual.
- B. Consent forms signed by the donor and witnessed by collecting law enforcement officer are required for all family references.

Note: In order to best meet National DNA Index System (NDIS) eligibility requirements and individual case particulars, missing persons cases may be either worked at the Indiana State Police Laboratory or outsourced to a laboratory equipped to perform mitochondrial DNA analysis, Y-STR analysis, and or kinship/pedigree testing. In order to perform some types of testing, it will be required that all appropriate and available case information, including whether DNA samples have been collected and profiled; dental records and radiographs; fingerprint cards; photographs if available; and any other relevant information must be entered into the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs' National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) by the appropriate medical examiner, coroner, or law enforcement agency. If assistance is needed to enter the case into NamUs, please contact a member of the Indiana State Police Biology Section's Missing Person/Unidentified Human Remains team or the University of North Texas Center for Human Identification Forensic Services Unit Program Manager at 817 765-5451 or visit [www.untfsu.com](http://www.untfsu.com) for additional information.

For more information or to obtain submission and consent forms, please contact a member of the CODIS Unit at the Indianapolis Regional Laboratory.

Indiana State Police Laboratory  
Indianapolis Regional Laboratory  
550 West 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite C  
Indianapolis, IN 46202  
Telephone: 317-921-5300  
Toll Free: 866-855-2840

Laboratory hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Monday through Friday

**INDIANA STATE POLICE LABORATORY**  
**UNIDENTIFIED HUMAN REMAINS TESTING INFORMATION SHEET**

Agency Case Number _____	ISP Case Number _____
Investigator _____	NCIC # _____
Email Address _____	Coroner/ME # _____
NamUs # _____	

**In order to perform the most appropriate analyses we must have specific information regarding the case. If you are unsure of any details please mark the appropriate area “Not Applicable (N/A)” or contact a member of the CODIS Unit for further instructions.**

**Additional Questions for UHR Cases**

1. Are the remains known to be human? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Are autopsy or anthropology reports available? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is a putative identity known/suspected?  
If yes, are direct or family references available for comparison? \_\_\_\_\_
4. When/where were remains located? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Is additional sample available for testing if necessary? \_\_\_\_\_

**Case Summary**

**In order to improve the possibility of generating a complete DNA profile, the entire sample may need to be consumed.**

May the DNA Analyst at their discretion consume (in their entirety) samples submitted in this case?

☐ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (Authorizing Official)

**In order to maximize the potential for automated searching of DNA results (CODIS), the sample may be sent to an outside laboratory for additional DNA testing not performed by the Indiana State Police Laboratory.**

May the DNA analyst at their discretion send sample(s) to an outside laboratory for testing in this case (no charges will be assessed to the contributor without prior authorization)?

☐ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (Authorizing Official)